

5.0 ISSUES PREVENTING PARTICIPATION OR ENJOYMENT

5.1 Infrastructure and Safety

Infrastructure

Most Gisborne cycling occurs on roadways, although there were also a wide variety of other places mentioned by respondents to the July 2004 survey³. Walkers identified that they most commonly walked in their own neighbourhoods, including to the local shops or schools, paths or tracks as well as parks or sports grounds.

Just 3% of those surveyed in July 2004 considered the existing provision of cycling facilities to be very satisfactory. The survey results suggest that the community consider there to be serious issues associated with the existing cycling facilities. The responses indicate a need for significant improvement. Thirty percent of those who ride bikes are dissatisfied with the current cycling facilities.

With regard to walkers, the survey indicated that there was generally more satisfaction with facilities although some opportunities for improvement were identified. Only 6% were very satisfied with the current walking facilities.

Safety

The paramount need of walkers and cyclists is safety. One of the best tools available for safely integrating cyclists into the transportation system is the identification and development of a cycle network, especially where this enables provision of separate cycle lanes.

Only one third of random survey respondents considered Gisborne safe to cycle around. Significantly more school-aged respondents considered Gisborne safe to cycle round. This may be due to a lack of understanding of the dangers associated with cycling or that these respondents considered themselves bullet proof. Conversely this may indicate that other respondents were overly cautious. Specific concerns about safety related to a lack of cycle lanes, concerns with roundabouts, narrow roads and traffic generally.

Two thirds of respondents considered Gisborne a safe place to walk around. Those who did not consider it safe to walk around suggested footpaths needing repairs, concerns about lighting, dogs and traffic as reasons for not feeling safe.

³ Gisborne District Cycling and Walking Survey as Digi Poll Ltd survey conducted by International Research Consultants Ltd, prepared for Gisborne District Council in July 2004.

5.2 Issues Identified – Infrastructure and Safety

Issues identified through the various consultation exercises undertaken to date are summarised below. For a full explanation of all issues identified refer to Part II, Section 10 of this strategy:

5.2.1 The existing road network is increasingly unsafe for cyclists.

5.2.2 State Highways are not designed to be safe for cyclists.

5.2.3 Roundabouts are not designed to be safe for cyclists.

5.2.4 Layby areas are not recognised, for maintenance purposes, as cycleways.



Fitzherbert Street Roundabout

(Photo: Kim Smith)



Smooth surface not carried into layby area,
Ormond Road (Photo: Kim Smith)

5.2.5 Little consideration has been given to the needs of disabled people.

5.2.6 Conflict between motor vehicles, walkers and cyclists reduces safety.

5.2.7 Lack of maintenance of pedestrian or cycle routes makes their use unsafe.

5.2.8 Lack of information about existing routes and facilities reduces their use.

5.2.9 Lack of promotion and development of new and safer routes continues to discourage participation in walking and cycling.

5.2.10 Lack of associated facilities for walkers and cyclists discourages participation.

5.2.11 Lack of mountain biking facilities prevents participation.

5.2.12 Behaviour of cyclists and pedestrians and motorists, creates additional hazards.

5.3 Education and Promotion

Changing human behaviour is one of the key components to increasing participation in walking and cycling activities. Promotions of motor vehicles use very large budgets and countering this advertising will require good resourcing. A number of organisations have established programmes to educate and promote specific health messages and sporting events. There is an overall need to educate motorists and cyclists especially, to encourage better understanding, better visibility and hence safer sharing of roads.

Respondents to the July 2004 survey indicated that in order to encourage cycling Council could provide cycle lanes, improve road safety for cyclists, run promotions and provide more cycle racks for parking bikes. Although a significant portion of respondents who were either under 35 years, Maori or did not presently ride bikes, did not know what Council could do to encourage cycling.

With respect to walking, some respondents suggested promoting the health benefits of walking and other sorts of promotions. Other respondents suggested better safer and more scenic footpaths or tracks. Issues of overgrown verges and broken glass were also identified. Whilst a significant portion of respondents who were either under 35 years, Maori or male, did not know what would encourage walking.

Eighty percent of respondents undertake some form of exercise on a weekly basis and almost all who did not participate mentioned some form of health problems or age as their reason for not participating.⁴ This suggests that most respondents were aware of the health benefits of these activities.

The survey also identified that participation in bike riding drops off during the 26 – 35 year age group, reflecting the increased vehicle mobility of this age group.

5.4 Identified Issues - Education and Promotion

Issues identified through the various consultation exercises undertaken to date include:

5.4.1 Lack of coordinated and effective approach to education

5.4.2 Lack of information about existing routes and facilities reduces their use

5.4.3 Social attitudes to walking and cycling need to be reversed to increase participation.

⁴ Gisborne District Cycling and Walking Survey as Digi Poll Ltd survey conducted by International Research Consultants Ltd, prepared for Gisborne District Council in July 2004.